

Life is Worth Living

My name is Rev. Walter Nagle. I am the Director of Pro Life Activities for the Diocese of Norwich. I am writing to express my opposition to SB 1076: "An Act concerning aid in dying for terminally ill patients." I am writing as a priest and as a son. On 12/21/22, my dad, Walter Nagle, died. I am grieving his loss. My dad had Lou Gehrig's disease (ALS). He had lost the ability to speak and to swallow. He had a feeding tube placed in his stomach. We had to communicate with him using a written board. His favorite expression was: Pray, Hope, and Don't Worry. That was his mantra and that was how he lived his life. The bill being considered by the public health committee is Assisted Suicide.

Some would argue that my dad's life had lost its purpose or meaning. Some would view his suffering as useless or tragic. My dad didn't. He taught me many lessons in his 86 years but the greatest lesson he taught me was how to die with dignity. To legalize Assisted Suicide for terminally ill patients is to begin a slippery slope. Some say the slippery slope is a scare tactic. It isn't. Who can predict what blessings may be in store for us if we die a natural death? Relationships can be healed. Maybe a loved one is just waiting to hear the words "I love you" from the terminally ill. Pain can be dealt with. There are wonderful resources in Palliative care and hospice.

What about the disability community? For 10 years now they have come before the Public Health Committee arguing that their lives have meaning and value, too. Instead of rushing to cross a line ("Thou shall not kill") that should not be crossed, let's put our resources together and offer truly compassionate care at life's end. Thank you for your consideration. Life is Beautiful. Life is worth living. Always.

Reverend Walter Nagle